

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-18

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 211765

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH GUINEA BISSAU COMMISSIONER FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

FOLLOWING ARE PRINCIPAL POINTS MADE IN COURSE OF COURTESY
CALL SEPTEMBER 24 ON GUINEA BISSAU FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMISSIONER VICTOR MARIA BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY EASUM.
MEETING TOOK PLACE AT NEW YORK OFFICE OF GUINEA BISSAU
MISSION.

(1) EASUM WELCOMED GUINEA BISSAU'S ADVENT TO UNITED NATIONS
FAMILY. HE NOTED TIMELINESS HIS CALL ON MARIA IN LIGHT
GB'S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE EXACTLY A YEAR PREVIOUS.
HE EXPLAINED HIS SPECIAL PERSONAL INTEREST IN GB DATING FROM
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ASSIGNMENT IN DAKAR 1963-1966, VISITS TO BISSAU AND THE

INTERIOR THAT HE MADE IN NOVEMBER 1964 AND JANUARY 1966, AND CONTACTS WITH AMILCAR AND LUIS CABRAL AND OTHER MEMBERS OF PAIGC. HE REITERATED US DESIRE DEVELOP MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONS WITH GUINEA BISSAU AND SAID HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES LOOKED FORWARD TO BETTER ACQUAINTANCE.

(2) MARIA SAID US, FRANCE AND GERMANY HAD TRADITIONALLY ENJOYED POOR REPUTATION WITH PAIGC BECAUSE THESE GREAT POWERS HAD PROVIDED PORTUGAL WITH ESSENTIAL SUSTENANCE ENABLING IT MAINTAIN OPPRESSIVE POLICIES IN AFRICA. CLAIM

THAT US SUPPORT SOLELY WITHIN NATO CONTEXT IRRELEVANT AND MISLEADING. ATTITUDES OF US AND OTHER ALLIES OF PORTUGAL HAD BEEN SHARPLY CONTRASTED BY, FOR EXAMPLE, SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES WHOSE AID IN FINAL MONTHS OF STRUGGLE HAD BEEN A MAJOR ELEMENT IN SUCCESS OF PAIGC EFFORTS. IN SPITE OF THIS HERITAGE, HOWEVER, PAIGC PREPARED LET BYGONES BE BYGONES. PAIGC REALIZED GREAT POTENTIAL OF COUNTRIES LIKE USTO ASSIST GB. PAIGC LOOKED FORWARD TO GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES THAT WISHED IT WELL.

(3) ALTHOUGH THERE WAS CONTINUING UNCERTAINTY OVER HOW TO RESOLVE CAPE VERDE ISSUE, MARIA THOUGHT ALL OTHER QUESTIONS BETWEEN PAIGC AND PORTUGAL HAD BEEN SETTLED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO ENCOURAGE AND ENHANCE CONTINUING DECOLONIZATION EFFORTS BY PORTUGAL. PAIGC WOULD DO ALL IT COULD TO ASSIST PORTUGAL IN THIS REGARD. RECENT CONVERSATIONS IN LISBON HAD CONVINCED HIM OF SINCERITY OF "NEW PORTUGAL" WHICH HE SAID DIFFERED FROM FASCIST PREDECESSOR AS DAY FROM NIGHT. AS FOR CAPE VERDE, PAIGC OPPOSED TO ANY REFERENDUM ARRANGED BY PORTUGUESE. PAIGC WOULD INSIST THAT ANY CONSULTATION OF THE POPULAR WILL WOULD HAVE TO BE JOINTLY ORGANIZED BY PORTUGUESE AND THE PAIGC. CITING ACTIVE PROPAGANDA EFFORTS CURRENTLY BEING CONDUCTED WITHIN CAPE VERDE BY PAIGC MILITANTS, MARIA IMPLIED THAT PAIGC WOULD ACCEPT NO RPT NO CONSULTATION OF THE ELECTORATE PRIOR TO BEING QUITE CERTAIN THAT THE RESULT WOULD BE A VOTE FOR UNION WITH GUINEA BISSAU.

(4) EASUM ASKED ABOUT OTHER CAPE VERDE POLITICAL GROUPS, CONFIDENTIAL

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PARTICULARLY THOSE FAVORING INDEPENDENCE. MARIA SAID A NUMBER OF SMALL FACTIONS OF "OPPORTUNISTS" HAD SPRUNG UP AFTER THE COUP IN LISBON BUT THAT THEY HAD LARGELY DISAPPEARED. MAJORITY OF POPULATION WISHED JOIN GB.

(COMMENT: IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION, ANOTHER MEMBER OF GUINEA BISSAU DELEGATION GAVE CONFLICTING IMPRESSION OF CAPE VERDIAN ATTITUDE, INDICATING STRENGTH OF PREFERENCE

FOR UNION MAY BE LESS THAN MARIA CLAIMED.)

(5) MADINA DO BOE WOULD BE ONLY THE TEMPORARY SEAT OF GOVERNMENT. ONCE ALL PORTUGUESE TROOPS WERE WITHDRAWN (BY OCTOBER 31), BISSAU COULD BE EXPECTED BECOME THE CAPITAL.

(6) TO DATE MOST PAIGC OFFICES ABROAD HAVE BEEN FINANCED BY THE HOSTCOUNTRIES. THIS IS NO LONGER APPROPRIATE. AT THE SAMETIME, HOWEVER, IT IS REALIZED HOW COSTLY SUCH MISSIONS ARE. THE EXTENT OF GB DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION ABROAD WILL ACCORDINGLY BE STUDIED WITH GREAT CARE. NO

THOUGHT WAS BEING GIVEN FOR THE PRESENT TO ESTABLISHING AN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, BUT THE OFFICE IN NEW YORK WOULD CERTAINLY BE CONTINUED.

(7) AS FOR INSTALLATION OF FOREIGN EMBASSIES IN BISSAU, THE PAIGC REALIZED HOW MINIMAL THE AVAILABLE FACILITIES ARE THERE. THEY NONETHELESS WOULD PREFER THAT RELATIONS BE HANDLED DIRECTLY BETWEEN BISSAU AND THE COUNTRY IN QUESTION RATHER THAN THROUGH A THIRD CAPITAL. IN PARTICULAR, AMBASSADORS TO GUINEA BISSAU "FROM IMPORTANT COUNTRIES" SHOULD BE RESIDENT IN BISSAU, NOT IN CONAKRY OR DAKAR. LATTER ARRANGEMENT WOULD BE NEITHER PRACTICAL NOR POLITICALLY APPROPRIATE. EASUM RESPONDED THAT DEFINITIVE DECISIONS ON NATURE AND TIMING OF ANY US PRESENCE IN BISSAU AWAITED FURTHER STUDY AND THAT WE WOULDWELCOME GB VIEWS ON THE MATTER.

(8) EASUM INDICATED US WAS STUDYING POSSIBLE WAYS IN WHICH IT MIGHT RESPOND TO REQUESTS FROM FORMER PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. HE EXPLAINED
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CONGRESSIONAL AND OTHER RESTRAINTS. HE SAID US WOULD BE INTERESTED IN LEARNING OF GB GOVERNMENT'S INTENTIONS CONCERNING PLANNING FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

(9) MARIA IS FRIENDLY, UNASSUMING, AND MODEST. ALTHOUGH SOMEWHAT SHY AND DIFFIDENT ABOUT TAKING CONVERSATIONAL INITIATIVES, HE IS NONETHELESS AN IMPRESSIVE AND ARTICULATE ADVOCATE FOR THE NEW NATION. HE IS WELL INFORMED AND INTELLIGENT, WITH A PRAGMATIC RATHER THAN IDEOLOGICAL APPROACH TO HIS COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS AND FUTURE. A GRADUATE OF THE LYCEE IN BISSAU, HE SPEAKS EXCELLENT FRENCH AND FAIRLY GOOD ENGLISH. KISSINGER

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